

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY.

St. Louis, May 24 1885

Dr. Asa Gray.

My dear Sir.

On Friday last, Mr. Shaw & Prof. Preleze called to see me & I had pleasant conversation with them. From the hours interview I was able partially to form an opinion of the Professor. He is evidently a modest & earnest man, looking forward to highest attainments in his department of science, but, as I think, willing to devote time & attention, for years to come, to the elementary instruction which would be his chief work here, until the community is educated up to a much higher standard of scientific knowledge than that now held.

Assuming that his present attainments are all that would be needed for our next five or ten years, I should myself be ready to run the risk of inviting him; - but I think that Mr. Shaw, (whom I have seen again since Prof. T. left) is not quite so sure. He fears that Prof. T. would look more to the attractive higher work of investigation than to the details

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of building up a "School of Botany" & popularizing the study as a means of public instruction. He requested me, however, to write to you & also to Prof. Trelease, in such manner as to bring the matter nearer to a decision, & I think he is disposed to abide by your & my opinion, if deliberately formed.

I have accordingly written the inclosed letter, & send to you with request to return it to me, with such suggestions of change as you may see fit to make. This trouble I venture to give you, to avoid all mistake & cross-purposes & I will make the changes before sending the letter. The loss of time is not so important as right action, for if we can secure the right man we shall be able to build up a School of Botany worthy of the name it will bear, & of which the whole Country will be proud.

Very truly Yrs, in the cause of Science -
W.G. Eliot